

ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON CONTINUING EDUCATION

Nevada State Board of Physical Therapy Examiners – Amended and Approved by the Board 09/2011

Definition of continuing education

Continuing education in physical therapy is a way to formally document participation in activities that are intended to develop and increase the knowledge, skills and professional performance and competence of the licensee. Additionally, continuing education prevents professional obsolescence by staying current with new developments in theory and practice and preventing skill and knowledge deterioration.

Clinical Physical Therapy Practice

Physical therapy practice implies that the continuing education course must meet criteria in the three categories listed below.

1. The course must address at least one topic that covers of an aspect of clinical practice directly related** to patient care along the continuum of active pathology, impairment, functional limitations and disability.¹
 - Core knowledge
 - Examination and evaluation
 - Prognosis
 - Diagnosis
 - Clinical decision making
 - Clinical guidelines
 - Evidence-based practice (as defined by The Internet Journal of Allied Health Sciences and Practice, Vol. 3, No. 4; defined at end of this document)
 - Intervention
 - Wellness, health promotion and fitness
 - Outcomes
 - Psychosocial issues (e.g., mental health, ethics, gender issues, cultural issues including spirituality, racial issues, professionalism as they relate to the practice of physical therapy)
 - Risk Reduction and prevention
 - Technology
2. The course must be taught by one individual or a team of individuals who hold a comparable level of education as a physical therapist and/or who have:
 - Exhibited experience in the topic
 - Demonstrated expertise in the topic
3. The course must be sufficiently rigorous to be comparable to at least the current entry level physical therapist or physical therapist assistant practice in any areas of physical therapy practice including:
 - Hospitals (e.g., critical care, intensive care, acute care, and subacute care settings)
 - Outpatient clinics
 - Rehabilitation settings
 - Skilled nursing extended care, or subacute facilities
 - Homes
 - Schools
 - Hospices
 - Corporate or industrial health centers
 - Industrial, workplace, or other occupational environments
 - Athletic facilities
 - Fitness centers and sports training facilities

4. If the course is self-paced (e.g., CD, DVD, book, audio, web-based), then a sufficiently rigorous post-test must be administered.

****Courses that are tangential or indirectly related to clinical practice will be reviewed and evaluated on a case-by-case basis.**

Non-Clinical Physical Therapy Practice

The course must address as least one topic of an aspect of physical therapy practice.

- Healthcare policy
- Healthcare administration
- General healthcare education
- Healthcare teamwork
- Physical therapy documentation
- Physical therapy reimbursement
- Physical therapy safety issues
- Physical therapy employment issues
- Interdisciplinary issues involving physical therapy
- Physical therapy research
- Physical therapy case management
- Medicolegal issues
- Patient satisfaction
- Language courses directly related to physical therapy practice

Courses not likely to receive approval for clinical or non-clinical education credit

1. Courses that are:

- Beyond the scope of physical therapy practice
- Clearly under the purview of another discipline
- Too basic or elementary for entry-level physical therapy or physical therapist assistant clinical practice
- Related to marketing strategies or expanding clinical practice
- About revenue generating issues
- About issues related to an area of clinical practice for which the scientific evidence has clearly invalidated the topic
- About a practice that is not accepted by contemporaneously practicing physical therapists
- About general self-improvement (e.g., self-help courses, communication improvement courses, business practice improvement courses)
- Employment law
- Language courses unrelated to physical therapy practice
- University coursework unrelated to healthcare
- Computer education courses
- Animal physical therapy related courses
- Training faculty

2. Courses that do not have sufficient documentation including:

- Course overview and objectives
- Hour-by-hour timeline (for courses 4 or more hours in length)
- Biosketch of the instructor(s)
- No post-test for non-onsite course

Guidelines:

Operate on a 50 minute hour

Do not consider the lunch break in the units awarded

Largest percentage of time will determine if awarded clinical or non-clinical units

Maximum of .8 units can be awarded for non-clinical course

Maximum for any course is 1.5 units

Any course 4 hours or longer requires an hour-by-hour timeline

Definition of Evidence Based Practice:

Evidence based practice is the integration of best research evidence with clinical expertise and patient values. This definition states that clinical decision-making should be based on three components:

- 1) Best research**
- 2) Clinical expertise**
- 3) Patient values**

References:

1. Nevada Physical Therapy Board Practice Act
2. Guide to Physical Therapist Practice, Second Edition, American Physical Therapy Association. Physical Therapy 2001;8(1): 9-746.
3. Sackett, DL, Straus, SE, Richardson, WS Rosenberg, W, Haynes, RB, 2000, Evidence-Based Medicine. How to Practice and Teach EBM (Evidenced Based Medicine). 2nd edition. Churchill Livingstone, NY.